1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

# ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

## THE BRAHMIN

793 791 There is only one Brahmin family in the village. The head of this family enjoys considerable local prestige owing to the fact of his birth, and also because he is a substantial landowner. He is the local priest as well as an astrologer. People consult him regarding the suitability of proposed marriages, and when negotiations are completed they seek his astrological calculations regarding an auspicious date and time for the wedding itself. He officiates at the marriage ceremony among the higher castes. On childbirth he is consulted about the planetary position at the actual time of the baby's birth, and its astrological implications for the child as well as for the parents and the other members of the family. If the reading indicates any difficulty, the Brahmin is often commissioned to offer special worship and perform the necessary rituals to ward off the evil. Similarly, after a death the Brahmin is consulted. If it is found that the time of death was inauspicious the members of the household may be asked to leave the residence temporarily, for a period of three to six months, according to the advice of the Brahmin. These consultations on the occasions of birth and death are generally sought only by the people of higher castes and by those who are well-to-do. Prescribed fees have to be paid to the Brahmin in cash for these consultations. Indirectly, the Brahmin contributes also to the agricultural activities of the community. He advises the agriculturists on when to start sowing at the beginning of the agricultural year. He is also consulted regarding the auspicious dates for starting weeding and harvesting. The date of the New Eating ceremony for the different families in the village is fixed by him. For these consultations no one pays him in cash. He visits the houses of his agriculturist clients fortnightly or once a month, especially in the harvesting season, and is customarily given a certain quantity of grain by each family.

## THE KOMTI

564 443 426 The Komtis are traders. They also function as village moneylenders. They keep a permanent small shop at some central point in the village, and also attend the weekly markets in the neighbouring villages. They generally sell provisions for cash, although things may also be bought on credit by those who are known to